

DELEGATED DECISION REPORT

SMD/2024/0507
Valid 26/11/2024

PLUM TREE COTTAGE
FOXT ROAD
FOXT

DESCRIPTION OF AIR
SOURCE HEAT PUMP

(FULL - HOUSEHOLDER)

MAIN ISSUES

- Development within a Conservation Area
- Neighbour amenity

DESCRIPTION OF SITE

The site consists of a stone bungalow and its curtilage, and was approved under SMD/2016/0729. The site is located within the Foxt Conservation Area.

PROPOSAL

The application seeks permission for an air source heat pump to be sited at the front of the property which fronts the highway, approximately 870mm high, with a width of 1250mm and a depth of 362mm. The position of the heat pump will be below the ground level of the road.

RELEVANT LOCAL AND NATIONAL PLANNING POLICIES

Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan (Adopted 2020)

SS1 Development Principles
SS2 Settlement Hierarchy
SS9 Smaller Villages Area Strategy
DC1 Design Considerations
T1 Development and Sustainable Transport

National Planning Policy Framework

Paragraph(s) 1 -14, 47, 131, 135, 167 - 168, 207.
Section(s) 4 – Decision making, 12 – Achieving well designed and beautiful places, 14 – Meeting the challenge of climate change, flooding and coastal change, 16 – Conserving and enhancing the historic environment

Adopted Supplementary Planning Documents/Guidance (SPD/G):

- Design Principles for Development in the Staffordshire Moorlands
- Staffordshire Moorlands Design Guide SPD
- Space About Dwellings SPD

SITE HISTORY / RELEVANT PREVIOUS APPLICATIONS

- SMD/2016/0729. Erection of a 3 bedroom bungalow and new vehicular access. DECISION: APPROVED.
- NMA/2017/0011. DESCRIPTION: Non material amendment for installation of a window over rear elevation doors to lounge. DECISION: NMA-APP
- SMD/2020/0256. DESCRIPTION: Proposed change of use from agricultural to garden use. DECISION: APPROVED

CONSULTATIONS

Publicity

Site Notice expiry date: Expired
Neighbour consultation period ends: Expired
Press Advert: Expired

Public Comments

Three objections have been received from the same neighbours, citing noise and the Conservation Area as the primary reasons for concern.

Town / Parish Comments

Support approval.

Environmental Health

The Environmental Health Department have no objection to this application.

Staffordshire County Council Highways

No consultation response received.

Conservation Officer

No objection: Plum Tree Cottage is located within the Foxt conservation area. The dwelling is set back from and slightly below the street level. As such the proposed ASHP is unlikely to be viewed from the street scene, or outside of the application site. As such there will be no harm to the heritage asset and consequently there are no heritage objections.

OFFICER COMMENTS

Principle of Development

In accordance with Policies SS1 and SS2 of the Staffordshire Moorlands Local Plan the Council expects all new development to make a positive contribution towards

the sustainability of communities and to protect and where possible enhance the environment. The site is located within the Smaller Village of Foxt, and therefore falls under Policy SS9. SS9 allows only for appropriate development, and seeks to ensure that new development reflects and enhances each village's special character and heritage by protecting and enhancing the setting and historic character of the village, including heritage assets. In this case, the proposed development is within the Conservation Area, however the Conservation Officer has raised no concerns. Therefore the proposed development is acceptable in principle.

Design

SMDC Policy DC1 requires development to be of a high quality and add value to the local area, incorporating creativity, detailing and materials appropriate to the character of the area; and be designed to respect the site and its surroundings and promote a positive sense of place and identity through its scale, height, density, layout, siting, character and appearance.

Paragraphs 131 and 135 of the NPPF outline what is expected of good design and required for the development of high quality, beautiful places, and provides for a high standard of amenity for existing and future users. The design of the proposed air source heat pump is standard for an appliance of this nature, and will be set below as the natural ground level behind a retaining wall in front of the property, largely obscuring it from view. The Conservation Officer has raised no objections to this.

Amenity

Paragraph 135 f) of the NPPF seeks to secure a high standard of amenity for all existing and future occupants. Local Plan Policy DC1 requires development to achieve a satisfactory relationship to adjacent development and to not cause unacceptable effects by reason of visual intrusion, overlooking, shadowing, overbearing effect, noise, light pollution or other adverse impacts on local character and amenity. The site is located next to the Fox and Goose car park to the north east, and a property known as The Malthouse to the south west. Opposite, is the property known as Rose Cottage. Due to the degree of separation of at least 15 metres, it is not considered that the development would have an unacceptable impact on residential amenity.

The MCS Manual Sound Calculator puts the total noise output, after adjustment, at 40.45dB, which is below the 42dB threshold and therefore acceptable in terms of noise. Environmental Health have no objection in this regard and a refusal on these grounds would therefore be unsustainable.

Highway Safety

Paragraph 104 of the NPPF states that patterns of movement, streets, parking and other transport considerations are integral to the design of schemes and contribute to making high quality places. Policy T1 seeks to provide safe and sustainable access and ensure that development does not lead to an increase in on street parking. The proposed development would have no impact on highway safety due to the nature of the proposal. The application is therefore acceptable in this regard.

Heritage

Policy DC2 seeks to preserve and enhance heritage assets and their setting, and ensure that proposals contribute positively to the character of the built and historic environment.

Paragraph 167 of the NPPF states that Local Planning Authorities should also give significant weight to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements to existing buildings, both domestic and non-domestic (including through installation of heat pumps and solar panels where these do not already benefit from permitted development rights). Where the proposals would affect conservation areas, listed buildings or other relevant designated heritage assets, local planning authorities should also apply the policies set out in chapter 16 of this Framework.

Paragraph 208 in Chapter 16 states that local planning authorities should identify and assess the particular significance of any heritage asset that may be affected by a proposal (including by development affecting the setting of a heritage asset) taking account of the available evidence and any necessary expertise. They should take this into account when considering the impact of a proposal on a heritage asset, to avoid or minimise any conflict between the heritage asset's conservation and any aspect of the proposal. None of the adjacent buildings are listed, and the proposed development is considered not to have a detrimental impact on the Conservation Area as it will be in a discreet location set below a retaining wall on a new build property, and the Conservation Officer has not raised an issue with the proposal. Therefore, the proposed development is considered to be acceptable.

CONCLUSION / PLANNING BALANCE

On balance, the proposed development is considered acceptable as significant weight has been given to the need to support energy efficiency and low carbon heating improvements. The noise generated from the proposed development is below the threshold for objection by Environmental Health, and the impact on the Conservation Area is acceptable. Therefore, whilst the concerns of neighbours are noted the recommendation is to approve.

OFFICER RECOMMENDATION : APPROVE, subject to conditions.

Case Officer: Reuben Berriman

Recommendation Date: 21/01/2024

X *B.S. Haywood*

Signed by: Ben Haywood

On behalf of Staffordshire Moorlands District Council